

MIRACLE EAR

Mary F. Menefield
3714 Sherwood Way
San Angelo, Texas 76901

4103 '00 NOV 16 P2 49

4102 '00 NOV 16 P2 49
Phone 915/442-5809

October 25, 2000

Honorable Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W. Room 615F
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala,

I am the office manager for a hearing aid specialist in San Angelo, who provides hearing health care services to hundreds of hearing-impaired Americans in Texas. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may shortly propose changes to the way hearing aids are sold that could put me, and office personnel of other independent dispensers, out of the profession we know and love.

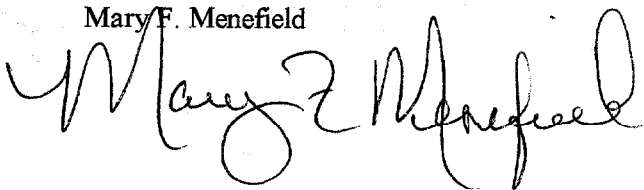
A study commissioned by IHS in 1998, found that, should organized Audiology succeed in becoming the gatekeepers of hearing aid dispensing, 92% of Hearing Instrument Specialists would be forced out of their profession. This not only affects the specialists, but their office staff and the families of their office staff. This rule would, without justification, cost numerous people their jobs.

It is my understanding that the FDA rule would also reportedly impede access to hearing health care services by allowing the states to erect new and unjustified barriers to health care services. Already too many American seniors are unable to afford help for their hearing loss; a loss which alters their ability to perform or enjoy simple daily activities. Ironically, this rule would only serve to increase costs to the hearing impaired.

Please don't let the FDA propose this new rule. It's bad for the hearing impaired and bad for small business hearing health care providers. Please write the President and the Secretary of Health urging that this proposed rule be rejected. I would greatly appreciate a copy of any letter you send on behalf of me and the hearing impaired I deal with on a daily basis.

Respectfully yours,

Mary F. Menefield



93N-0372

C 4870



MIDLAND, TEXAS 797 10/27/00

HONORABLE DONNA SHALALA
SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
200 INDEPENDENCE AVE, S.W. ROOM 615F
WASHINGTON, D.C 20201

